



The Flames Within



👁 143 ✓ 10 ★ 13

Chapter 1 by Jayde Avalon

I would love to smash someone into a wall right now.

But I have to control this anger.

Otherwise, it'll control me.

My head is throbbing with my pounding heartbeat, surging quicker with every second. My teeth are clenched so hard it's making my jaw ache. My palms are bleeding by now from the force of my fingernails digging into them. I'm sweating--the air is heating--I can see waves of heat coming off of everything in the room, off of my sister, still looking defiant through her sweat...

Control.

/I must control./

No...it's too late; I've become too angry.

My sister and everything around us erupts in explosive flame.

Chapter 2 by Laura Frost

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Oh, it always feels so good
to live as I was meant to. I
condemned

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free to consume, to burn,
my path are surely

Only for a few moments.

Then, comes the fear. The shame. The panic. My dear sister, the ice to my flame, will surly melt if I do not control this. Even she cannot withstand this for much longer.

I cannot control this. That panic fuels the flame. We are caught in a deadly cycle, my flame and I. Not much longer, and the heat will be enough to cause me pain, burn my flesh. By that time, this house and all in it will be gone.

My sister will be gone.

I hear sirens. Good. The fire department will come. They will stop my fire.

Closer, closer.

There.

The first blast of water hits, and I scream. The pain is excruciating, it always is. It feels like my soul is being ripped apart, piece by piece. My fire screams with me.

It does not take me long to faint.

Part of me hates myself for loving the sweet release from this world, even if it's not forever.

I hope they made it in time to save my sister.

Chapter 3 by Jayde Avalon



I wake in a hospital bed attached to IVs...wait, this isn't a hospital bed. It's a bath.

My first thought is Adelaide. How is she? Did they save her in time? Oh god, if I killed her...

"Hey, flamethrower," a familiar voice greets me. My best friends Robin and Raevynn Nightingale

step through the door, close it, and walk across the room to my now-leaking bath. Suddenly alarmed, I look down at myself. Ugh. I'm naked. The door is closing. Oh, well. At least I'm not naked.

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"How is Addy?" I couldn't help but

"Wow. No 'hi, how you doing,' no 'nice to see you?' Kind of rude, sugarpop." Robin bends over me and rubs my cheek with his thumb. I sit up and push his hand away. "Please," I beg, "how is my sister?"

Robin and Raevynn look at each other worriedly. My heart sinks into my stomach.

"Adelaide is in critical condition. She has...13% chance of survival."

Chapter 4 by Laura Frost



Thirteen percent.

My hands shake. I grab my elbows and hold on until the tears brimming at the edge of my eyes disappear. "Where is she?"

"The burn ward. I...you can't see her." Rae looks down at the floor. "I'm sorry. She's not alone, Liam's with her right now."

I can feel my heart breaking, but I nod. "I understand."

Robin leans against the wall and covers his face with one hand. "What are we going to do now? The fire department couldn't find a source, naturally, and the police are asking questions."

"Are we going to have to run again?" There's a tremor in Raevynn's voice. "I liked this town."

I shake my head. "We can't run anymore. I have to learn to control my powers, and I can't do it here."

"You're just taking a bit longer than the rest of us." Robin starts to pace. "We can put it to a vote-"

"No!" My voice is weak, but I can still shout. "How many times have you hurt someone because you couldn't control your powers?" I turn to Raevynn. "How about you? Flight and Telepathy,

easy to control, easy to use!

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"What about Liam? He had to learn to control his powers, and his voice is almost a whisper."

"Phasing in and out isn't a power, it's a skill."

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Raevynn takes a step towards me. "You're not..."

"Calling the Agent? I don't really have a choice anymore, do I?" This is the only way to control the Fire. The only way to protect everyone. "I won't make you come with me. This is my choice."

Robin hands me a cell phone. "We do this together. Always have, always will."

I start to dial.

Chapter 5 by R



"Robin." Says the agent. The voice has been burned in to my memory for ages; I doubt I will ever forget it. We have the door to my room locked tight, and the phone on low speaker.

"And Raevynn." Robin adds. "And, and Jade." I tense, and there is a pause, as the man on the other end of the phone pauses, thinking.

"No Liam?" He asks us. He doesn't ask after Adelaide, which means he knows what has happened to her.

"No Liam." I tell him, firmly. My fists are clenched against the sheets of the bed. "He's with Addy."

"I suppose you aren't calling to check up on me." The agent says with what sounds almost like a smirk, though it is mildly sad. (Does he care? About us? It had never shown before.) "You need out."

"No." I tell him. "I need what you promised us. I need control."

"I thought your little group swore off our organization." The agent notes with disdain. "I thought you decided that you would never come crawling back to us."

"This is the deal." I say firmly, one hand holding on to Raevynn, the other to Robin. "We all come. You heal Adelaide. Everyone but me leaves. You give me control, and when that is through, I

leave.

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There is a pause. "That doesn't seem like a good deal. Why should I accept it?"

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"Because if you don't," Robin continues, "I will reveal everything about you and your organization to the police, the government, and the world."

"And if they don't believe you?" The Agent asks.

"We make them." Raevynn says, and she almost sounds like she means it.

"While you are here, the Organization will do non-invasive tests to track the development of your powers. Other than that, the deal stands."

I look to Rae and Robin. They nod. "Deal." I say. "Infiltrate the hospital if you haven't already. If you need to take Adelaide somewhere, we all go. While I learn control, you will allow free contact. If that is not recieved, I will leave."

"It might not be so easy as last time." The Agent says. "But I agree. Your threats were convincing, and the chance to study your progression is enough. We will come and gather you shortly." The line went dead, leaving only light static.

"I just told Liam!" Rae says happily. "I'm going to go and check on Addy." She jumped up, slightly floating, and landed down on the ground to walk over to the ICU where my sister was.

I moved to stand up, and Robin handed me my clothing out of a bag. "Jade." She said, turning to me. "I - you aren't the only one who worries about their powers hurting other people. You aren't the only danger."

She doesn't match my eyes as I stare at her. I've already dressed, and now I stare at my hands. I know what I've done, how many people I've hurt or even killed with these powers. I know how far past I've gone from the rest of the group in that manner, how at most all that Addy or Rae or Li have done is injure, to their knowledge.

That sits with me for a moment, knowing that what they did to escape, or on accident, was nothing compared to the death toll these powers had tied to them. It also brought a stray thought to my head:

I didn't know how many people Robin had hurt. Or how many Robin had killed.

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